

THE PITCAIRN BIBLE

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THE PITCAIRN BIBLE

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THE PITCAIRN BIBLE

A BIBLE, of unusual interest for its associations, has been given to the Library by Eliza H. Lord, Daniel M. Lord, Herbert G. Lord, and Harriet Lord Bradford. It once belonged to one of the mutineers of the ship *Bounty*, and for about fifty years it was used by the leader of the colony on Pitcairn Island. Except for a prayer-book, it may have been, for many years, the only book on the island. It is a small Bible, the pages about $5\frac{1}{4}$ inches high and $2\frac{7}{8}$ inches wide. It contains both Testaments, and was printed by Alexander Kincaid in Edinburgh in 1764. It was, unfortunately, rebound years ago. The original title-page is missing, and a fac-simile in ink has been substituted. Otherwise it is complete, including the title-page of the New Testament. The pages are stained, but in good condition, although drilled, here and there either by a book-worm or by some insect of the South Pacific, with similar tastes. There is an inscription on one blank page recording a marriage, probably in Scotland or England, years before the sailing of the *Bounty*. It is a matter for regret that John Adams, the leader of the Pitcairn Islanders, did not record in the book some of the marriages which he performed. Another inscription records the original gift of the Bible by one of the Islanders. Both of the pages which contain writing are reproduced here.

So many books and articles have been written about the mutiny on the *Bounty*, and some of them, like Lady Belcher's "The Mutineers of the *Bounty*," are so well known, that it is unnecessary to print anything more than the following accounts, which are directly associated with the Bible. The first of them was written by Edward Harris, and is taken from manuscript pages, which have been sewn into the Bible itself. The second was written by the donors. All accounts of the mutiny, and of the colony on Pitcairn differ more or less. It will be noticed that there is a variance in these accounts as to the identity of the member of the colony who gave the Bible to Levi Hayden. One gives the name of Mrs. Mary Christian, widow of one of the mutineers; and the other, that of John Adams, leader of the colony. If the date of the gift (1839) is correct, then the inscription is probably also correct, for John Adams died in 1829.

Mr. Harris's so-called "Autobiography" is given below. (The spelling is followed.)

AUTOBIOGRAPHY

OF THIS BIBLE.

COMPILED

By Edward Harris.

1859.

I was brought into existence in the year of our Lord One thousand seven hundred and sixty four, in the city of Edinburgh, (Scotland.) My early history during the first twenty three years of my being, like that of Him of whom my writers testify, is veiled in obscurity. How long I remained with my Publisher — the changes of ownership through which I passed — the varied treatment I received from my different proprietors — my influence on the hearts and lives of my readers, and their course of life and ultimate destiny respectively; were not recorded and have passed into oblivion to be disclosed hereafter.

In the twenty third year of my age, *viz.* on the twenty third day of December 1787, I was taken by a sailor on board a British ship called the "*Bounty*," which was fitted out for the purpose of transporting plants of the Bread-tree from the Society Islands to the West Indies — How that seaman came in possession of me, whether by purchase, or as a gift from an affectionate and pious mother, or friend; is also, unfortunately, not recorded. It was, most probably, the latter.

The ship sailed from Spithead that same day, and soon afterwards encountered a terrific storm, which so disabled her, that we were compelled to stop at Teneriffe, which we reached on the fifth of January 1788, where we remained until the tenth, when we sailed again for Otaheite. After struggling with tempestuous weather for thirty days off Cape Horn, the ship leaking badly, and short of provisions; the commander gave orders to put about for the Cape of Good Hope, where we arrived on the twenty third day of May and remained thirty eight days.

We sailed again on the first of July, and reached Van Dieman's land on the twentieth of August. On the fourth of September we sailed again, and came to anchor in Matavai Bay, Island of Otaheite, on the twenty sixth of September, 1788. There we lay, until the fourth of April 1789 twenty seven weeks. During this time the seamen were permitted to mingle with the

Belonging to Rev. D. M. Lord.
Boston.
very valuable because
of its history.

C H A P. II.

9 And Azor begat Sadoe, and Sadoe begat Achim, and Achim begat Eliud.
10 And Eliakim begat Manasse, and Manasse begat Amos, and Amos begat Judas.
11 And Josed begat Joseph, and his brethren, about the time they were brought away to Babilon.
12 And Josephus begat Salathiel, and Salathiel begat Zorobabel.
13 And Zorobabel begat Abiad, and Abiad begat Eliahim, and Eliahim begat Azor.
14 And Azor begat Sadoc, and Sadoc begat Achim, and Achim begat Eliud.
15 And Eliud begat Eleazar, and Eleazar begat Matthan, and Matthan begat Jacob.
16 And Jacob begat Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ.
17 So all the generations from Abraham to David, are written generations; and from David until the carrying away into Babilon, are fourteen generations; and from the carrying away into Babylon unto Christ, are fourteen generations.
18 Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together she was found with child of the holy Ghost.
19 Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a publick example, was minded to put her away privately.
20 But, while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying,

The wife-mans of the eadg, &c.
N ow when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea, in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem.
2 Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.
3 And when the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.
4 And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he denied of them where Christ should be born.
5 And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judaea; for thus it is written by the prophet:
6 And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for thus it shall say thy prophet,
7 Thou Herod, when he had privily called the wise-men, enquired of them privately, what time the star appeared.
8 And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go, and search diligently for the young child, and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him.
9 When they had heard the King, they departed; and lo, the Star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was.
10 When they saw the Star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy.
11 And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrour.

natives on shore, and received from them, particularly from the females, so much kindness and attention, and found such abundant facilities for profligacy and dissipation in the luxurious and indolent habits of the people; that they were reluctant to leave the place when the ship was ready.

A few days after the ship left the island, the weather became squally with threatening clouds in the East. On the twenty third of April the ship anchored at Anamooka, one of the "Friendly Islands," lying W. of Otaheite, where she lay two days; and on the twenty seventh we were between the islands of Tofoa and Hotoo.

On the morning of the twenty eighth while sailing Westward, and S. W. from Tofoa, just before sunrise, Fletcher Christian, the officer of the watch, and acting lieutenant of the ship, together with the corporal, gunner's Mate, and one of the sailors; entered the commander's cabin while he was asleep, seized him and tied his hands behind him, and threatened him with instant death if he made any noise. At the same time they had placed guards at the doors of the officers' rooms, and three sentinels at the door of the cabin. Christian was armed with a cutlass, and the others with muskets and bayonets. They dragged the commander from his bed in his night dress, and forced him upon deck. One of them held a bayonet at his breast, while two others (of whom was Alexander Smith) stood behind him with their loaded muskets. They ordered the Boatswain, with a threat, to hoist out the ship's "*Launch*,"* immediately; which being done, two midshipmen and the clerk were ordered into it. Others were then called up from below, individually and hurried into it. The boatswain and seamen who were to go in the boat, were permitted to collect, some cordage, canvass, twine, sails, a cask of water, one hundred and fifty pounds of bread, a quadrant and compass; and then, with the officers, who were next called on deck, were forced into the boat. The carpenter, after some discussion, was permitted to take his tool chest, and one or two cutlasses were thrown into the boat; and then the commander himself was compelled to follow. The boat was then dropped astern by a rope, a few pieces of pork and some clothing were thrown into the boat, and after being the objects of sport awhile, that were cast adrift in the ocean; in all eighteen, besides the commander.

Two different reasons have been assigned for this revolt. The commander thought it was the result of the attachment formed between the mutineers and the natives of Otaheite; in connection with promises made to them by the latter, to induce them to return to the island and reside there. But, on the other hand, it appeared that the commander, who was a man of irritable temper, had insulted and tyrannized over the men and

* Her largest boat.

officers, (especially Fletcher Christian) to an intolerable degree, and that revenge prompted the act. One of the sailors was punished with twenty four lashes, for mutinous conduct, a few weeks after we left Teneriffe where we stopped for repairs.

Probably both reasons were combined in the production of the mutiny, and chiefly the latter; as we had left Otaheite more than three hundred miles behind us, when it broke out; and then it was an unpremeditated step on the part of Christian.

It was my fortune to be retained on board the ship, and to accompany the mutineers; as I belonged to one of them. But such were the circumstances under which I was then placed, that my influence for the time must have been entirely suspended. The fact of my preservation however amid such turmoil, was encouraging.

After the expulsion of the commander and those eighteen men, in that open boat, Fletcher Christian took the command of the ship, and sailed at once for Otaheite; where sixteen of the twenty five mutineers were left at their own request.

Fletcher Christian, Alexander Smith, and the other seven, then, each took a wife of the Tahitian women, and six of the men for servants; and after obtaining supplies, they sailed on the twenty first of September 1789 in search of some obscure retreat, where they might escape detection and elude research.

After several weeks they fell in with a rocky and uninhabited island in Lat. $25^{\circ} 4' S$ and Long. $130^{\circ} 25' W$. lying E S E from Otaheite, about one thousand miles; called *Pitcairn's* after its first discoverer. Here, after examination, they ran the ship ashore, and stripped and burned her. They used the materials taken from her, for forming a settlement; and, for a while, they were quite prosperous.

But, within four years after they landed here, the Otaheitean men had, through jealousy, killed the remaining Englishmen except Alexander Smith (whom they severely wounded,) and Edward Young, a midshipman. Soon after they were slain, the widows of the deceased Englishmen rose, and put to death all the Otaheitan men; thus leaving Smith and Young the only men alive, on the island, with nine women and several small children; the first-born of whom was a son of Fletcher Christian. His father was killed by an Otaheitan man, within two years after the landing.

Smith, who was called *Aleck*, assumed the care of the helpless families of widows and orphans, thus cast upon his friendship and protection. Young,

who assisted him, was a man of respectable education and of a serious disposition of mind.

The dreadful scenes in which they had been actors, and the solitude and tranquility which had now succeeded; afforded me a favorable opportunity for regaining my influence; and I became their companion and counsellor in their solitude; — and *they* soon became subjects of sincere repentance for their sins, and partakers, it is believed, of that forgiveness and remission of sin, which flows from faith in Jesus Christ, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation.

As the result of this blessed effect of my teachings upon their consciences, under the attendant influences of the Spirit of my Divine Author, I was employed in the instruction of the little helpless colony, thus isolated from their race; and, in connection with a Prayer-book, which, like myself, had been preserved, amid the scenes of physical and moral desolation; became the guide of their public and private devotions.

The Tahitians were very tractable and docile; and the children especially soon acquired an ardent thirst for Scriptural knowledge. Jehovah condescended to bless this simple and solitary instrumentality where the voice of the living preacher had never been heard; to the conversion and sanctification of most if not all, of that little community of women and children; who were then, including their two male protectors, nineteen in number; a large proportion of them being under nine years of age.

Mr Young, however, did not long continue among them, after his repentance. He died of Asthma, about A D. 1800. He seems to have taken no active part in the mutiny; appearing neither among the armed nor unarmed; and was, probably, of those who were confined below decks at the time of the seizure of the vessel.

Smith, or "Aleck," whom they also called "Father," was able to read, and in the latter part of his life, acquired the art of writing, and, prompted by a desire, resulting from his reformation, to redeem the time by devotedness to his Lord's service; — he drew from my pages a code of laws, and a system of religious principles; by which he was enabled, after the death of his associates, to train up the children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; in purity of morals, and a simplicity of manners, which have surprised and delighted every stranger who has visited them. They grew up a truly intelligent, virtuous, and christian community.

At their commencement, in 1790 they consisted of fifteen men and twelve women. Ten years afterwards, (1800) there remained of them, one man, five women, and nineteen children. In 1808 when the first vessel touched at the island since its settlement, the population amounted to thirty five; an increase of ten in eight years. At that time Aleck still retained his

original name. — Alexander Smith; but in 1814 when another vessel visited them, he had changed his name to that of “John Adams,” for what reason, does not appear, but supposed to be in honour of the second President of the United States.

Subsequently to 1814, perhaps about 1819 a whaleman had left on the island a competent School teacher, who also officiated as reader and preacher in their public religious assemblies.

In 1825 the colony consisted of thirty six males and thirty females. The captain of a British ship who then called at the island, was requested by Adams, to read to him and his wife (who had long been blind and bedridden) the matrimonial service from the Prayer-book; stating, that he had always purposed to have it done, whenever a suitable opportunity occurred. Accordingly, on the following day, they were duly united in marriage, and the event was registered in a book by their School teacher. Adams had himself officiated in all the previous marriages of the young people, always using the *ring* in the ceremony. He lived about three years after this, and died in the month of March 1829 aged seventy years. Previous to his death, he called together all the heads of the families, and advised them to appoint a chief or ruler, to take his place. With entire resignation to the Divine will, he exhorted them all to serve the Lord faithfully, who had adopted them as His children through the merits of Christ Jesus.

In 1830 they numbered seventy nine. The captain of another British vessel, sent to them in that year with supplies from the government, attended, with his chaplain, one of their evening religious services; which he described as very interesting; and testified to their morality, active benevolence, hospitality, and social order. The death of Adams had not interrupted the contentment and harmony of the little colony, although no one had yet been appointed to supply his place. Another educated Englishman, had come to reside among them, and had married a grand-daughter of the leading mutineer.—

In 1833 they numbered about one hundred. A governor had been chosen from among the colonists; the village then consisting of twelve dwelling houses, and an edifice which served both for a church and a schoolhouse.

In the Spring of the year 1839 the widows of two of the mutineers were still living at an extreme old age. One of them, Mrs. Mary Christian, was then my proprietress. Like her, I had become old and infirm; my outer covering which was originally handsome was worn out and gone, and my pages had become stained and worm eaten.

My owner's sight had become dim; which circumstance, in connection with the smallness of my typography, rendered me almost useless to her. My mission of mercy here, also, was accomplished; and other copies more youthful in age, and modern in dress, were being introduced among the

Presented to Mr
Levi Hayden
from
Mrs. Mary Christian
of
Pitcairns Island
August 20. 1834.

Presented to the Whi Com
at the Anniversary of
Boston Seamen's Friend
Society at Boston May
26th 1841 by Wm M Rogers
m. h. a. d.

INSCRIPTION ON FLYLEAF OF
THE PITCAIRN BIBLE

islanders. I was therefore prepared for another transfer, whenever it should be the will of Providence to remove me.

In the Summer of this year, Mr Levi Hayden, mate of a whaling ship from New Bedford (Mass) to the Pacific, made us a visit of about two weeks. And having with him a Bible of larger print than mine, he accepted the proposal of my owner to exchange it for me. Thus, I bade farewell to the spot, where, for nearly half a century, I had been permitted to remain as the honoured instrument of spiritual blessing to that helpless company of immortal souls; in bringing to repentance and a new and holy life their only remaining father and protector; and in the instruction and consolation of the aged and the young — the widow and the fatherless; and their preparation, under the attendant Spirit of grace, it is hoped, for that blessed world where, the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest.

Mr Hayden, on his return to the United States, again transferred me, in my old age to the care and keeping of his Pastor the Rev. Daniel M. Lord, then minister at the Seamen's chapel in Boston, to accompany him and others in their labors of love; as a living testimonial of the truth, that "the word of God is quick and powerful; — a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart; and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness."

About a year and a half after I came to Boston, I was introduced in this capacity to the christian community, at a meeting of the American Seamen's friend Society, by the Rev. William M. Rogers of Boston, a friend of my present owner. I was in a sorry plight, to be held up before so large a company of ladies and gentlemen; stripped of my outer covering, and my leaves loosened and defaced. But the account of my vicissitudes and my triumphs, as presented by Mr Rogers so wrought upon their feelings, that my appearance was disregarded. Since that time I have been permitted, on several occasions, to testify, by my presence in public assemblies, to the efficacy of the Bible for the supply of man's spiritual necessities, under every circumstance of his mortal pilgrimage.

In the Spring of 1859, the Rev. Edward Harris, of New York city, who had been in the service of the American Bible Society, volunteered to be my amanuensis in preparing this biography; and regretting my dilapidated condition, as well as my uncomely appearance; he took me to the Society's bindery, where my outward form was repaired and strengthened, and I was furnished with a new covering suitable to my age, being then ninety five years old.

[For the detailed history of the settlement of Pitcairn's island; the search for and trial of some of the mutineers; and the voyage and fate of those who were set adrift upon the ocean; See Harper's Family Library.]

The history of this Bible, written by the donors to the Library, contains additional facts of interest, and is, therefore, given herewith:

THE PITCAIRN BIBLE

This Bible has a remarkable history. It was published in 1764 in Edinburgh, Scotland. In it is recorded a marriage in 1769.

This Bible was given to the Rev. Daniel Miner Lord, the father of the four signers to this statement, who was Pastor of the Mariners' Church in Boston from 1834 to 1847. He made it a rule that to any sailor who, during his stay in port, spent his time in the Sailors' Home (which Mr. Lord had established in connection with his church) he gave a Bible when he sailed again. One such sailor, Levi Hayden by name, received a Bible from the Pastor of the Mariners' Church, and in the course of a voyage to the southern Pacific he visited Pitcairn Island. In conversation with John Adams, the leading man of the community, Adams complained that his eyes were getting dim and that he found great difficulty in reading from his Bible. Hayden examined the Bible and said he had one with larger print which he would exchange with Adams. So the next day when Hayden visited the Island again, he exchanged the Bible he had received from the Pastor of the Mariners' Church in Boston for the Bible which Adams had used so long in his governing and teaching the colony on Pitcairn Island.

On Hayden's return to Boston in 1840, he gave the Pitcairn Island Bible to our father. This has remained in our family ever since and has been the subject of hundreds of addresses to Sunday Schools, churches, and various religious meetings.

Its romantic history begins when, in 1784, it was taken aboard the British ship "*Bounty*," which was sent by the British government on a voyage to the southern Pacific islands to transplant some breadfruit trees to the British islands in the Caribbean Sea. In due time the ship reached Tahiti in the Society Islands group, where it remained for six months, preparing the trees to be taken to their new location. While there, the ship's crew became very friendly with the natives. The ship started on her return voyage and when a few days out, the crew rebelled against the tyranny of the captain and mutinied. They put the captain with the other officers in a longboat and cut them adrift, and then immediately put back to Tahiti. On arriving, about half of the mutinous crew left the ship, taking with them such share of the plunder as they chose. The remainder of the crew enlisted some of the men of Tahiti, each of the men took a Tahiti woman, and the company

sailed away in the "*Bounty*." After a voyage somewhat momentous, the ship reached Pitcairn Island, a fertile island in the extreme southern Pacific. There the crew decided to establish their home. They stripped the ship of everything that was worth saving and burned her. Curiously enough, the mutineers saved this Bible and also a Book of Common Prayer.

They were lost absolutely to the outside world for some twenty-odd years. Finally, on February 7, 1808, an American ship, Captain Mayhew Folger in command, seeking a fertile island to replenish its water supply, discovered on Pitcairn Island a quiet, orderly colony, living in peace and good order.

In the meantime, the English, pursuing their usual course, instructed every captain sailing to the southern Pacific to search for the mutineers and arrest them, bringing them back to England to suffer for their crimes. Later, two British ships did visit Pitcairn Island and finding such an orderly colony decided to disobey orders and not report their find of the "*Bounty*" mutineers to headquarters in London, but did annex the Island as a British colony.

It appears that in the little colony on Pitcairn Island, all of the mutineers, with the exception of two men, and all of the Tahiti men, through drink, quarreling, etc., had been destroyed. Of the two Englishmen remaining, one, a man possessing more ability than the others, had assumed the name of John Adams, probably as an additional means of hiding his identity. There were twenty-four children as a result of the union of the men with the Tahiti women, and John Adams, being the leader of the colony, felt that he was responsible for the training of these children. As has been stated, among the things saved from the "*Bounty*" was this Bible which John Adams took, therefore, and using it as his text book, he taught them to read and write and also taught them the way of godly living.

A colporteur of the American Bible Society, Edward Harris by name, on one of his visits to our home heard from our father the story of the Pitcairn Bible. He was very much interested and proposed that he should take the Bible and do what was necessary in order to keep the book from falling to pieces. When it was returned to our father, he was very much surprised and very indignant to find that the original front and back covers which were held together by the strong cords in the back of the book had been stripped off and the Bible had been rebound. Edward Harris had written the history of it from the one hearing he had had of our father's story and had that bound into the front of the Bible with the new binding. No doubt his intentions were good, but it detracted very much from the value of the Bible

which had showed its great age in its original covers and binding. However, the damage was done and could not be repaired, so it now goes into history in its present shape.

In Harper & Brothers Library there is a book which gives a very full and complete account of the mutiny of the "*Bounty*." Also, there is a book published by the Pacific Press Publishing Association of Mountain View, Cal., entitled "The Mutiny of the *Bounty* and Story of Pitcairn Island, 1790-1894," written by Rosalind Amelia Young, a native of Pitcairn Island, who visited this country for the purpose of fitting herself for the career of a trained nurse on the Island. This latter book gives many interesting details of life on the Island.

We four signers of this statement realize the value of this Bible and believe it should be placed where it will be permanently saved as a record of the wonderful power of its teachings, and so we have decided to place it with the Lenox Library in its collection of old and unusual Bibles, so that it may remain there and add somewhat to the interest of the collection.

ELIZA H. LORD

HERBERT G. LORD

DANIEL M. LORD

HARRIET LORD BRADFORD

NEW YORK, *May 4th*, 1924

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